



Purpose and Need Statement

The following is a Purpose and Need Statement for review during this Scoping process. After considering the Scoping comments received, the Federal Transit Administration under the National Environmental Policy Act and Sound Transit under the State Environmental Policy Act will finalize the Purpose and Need Statement and determine the range of alternatives to be evaluated in the EIS.

The purpose of the Federal Way Transit Extension is to expand the Sound Transit Link light rail system from SeaTac to the cities of Des Moines, Kent, and Federal Way in King County in order to meet the following objectives:

- Provide a rapid, reliable, accessible, and efficient alternative for travel to and from the corridor and other urban growth and activity centers in the region with sufficient capacity to meet projected demand.
- Expand mobility alternatives to traveling on congested roadways and improve connections to the regional multimodal transportation system with peak and off-peak service.
- Provide the high-capacity transit (HCT) infrastructure to support adopted regional and local land use, transportation, and economic development plans.
- Advance the long-range vision, goals, and objectives for transit service established by the Sound Transit Long-Range Plan for high-quality regional transit service connecting major activity centers in King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties.
- Implement a financially feasible system that seeks to preserve and promote a healthy environment.

The following conditions within the project corridor demonstrate the need for the project:

- North-south transit demand is expected to grow by 30 to 40 percent by 2035 as a result of residential and employment growth in the FWTE corridor and regionally.
- The FWTE corridor population is a highly transit-dependent population with needs for efficient, reliable regional connectivity.
- Congestion on I-5 and on the key corridor arterials leading in and out of the study area will increase and further degrade existing transit performance and reliability.
- There is a lack of reliable and efficient peak and off-peak transit service connecting persons in the FWTE corridor with the region's growth centers.
- Regional and local plans call for HCT in the corridor consistent with PSRC's *VISION 2040* and the *Regional Transit Long-Range Plan*.
- Implementing the project will help meet environmental and sustainability goals of the state and region, including reduced vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emissions.